



When  
Christmas  
Comes

27/1  
by

*Edward Lodge Curran*





When Christmas Comes,  
May Christ  
Rest in  
Your heart  
As in a manger.



Merry,  
Merry,  
Christmas

From

Leo

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To my Mother,  
Who, this Christmas,  
Is with Christ in heaven,  
Where she waits for me.

# When Christmas Comes



By

Edward Lodge Curran



The  
INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC  
TRUTH SOCIETY

407 Bergen Street  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

WHEN CHRISTMAS COMES

Once again the cold wind blows,  
Wedded to the virgin snows;  
As the Christmas story's told,  
In your heart my own enfold.

Once again I wish to you:  
Peace, that's born beyond the blue,  
Hope, that knows no cloud or stain,  
Love, beyond the reach of pain.

E. L. C.

# When Christmas Comes

**C**HRISTMAS is with us once  
again.

It comes when the winds of  
winter sing their symphony  
round the western world.

It comes when the old year  
is wearied of existence and  
anxious to lie forever within  
the tomb of forgotten centuries.

It comes when we ourselves  
are tired of life and wistful  
for the spiritual joys of  
childhood.

When Christmas comes, Christ  
is not far behind.

**T**HERE is no lovelier feast  
within the calendar of the Church.

It is not the greatest feast  
in Christendom.

In dignity it must yield to

Pentecost and to Easter.

In loveliness it yields to  
nothing save itself.

**L**IKE children in the story  
hour at their mother's knee,  
we never tire of the Christmas  
pageant.

We see again the Wise Men from  
the East, bearing the burden of  
the desert's day, conquering  
the coolness of the mountain  
nights, following the meteor  
that outsped the swiftest comet,  
to come and kneel before a  
child's crib and adore.

We see the gifts within their  
aged hands: the gold of the  
East for which men have bled  
and died; the perfumes of the  
East for which women have sold  
their souls.

We see them leave their gifts  
and go their way and melt into  
the endless shadows of obscurity.



WE see again the shepherds  
and their flocks roused from  
imprisoned sleep by the choral  
cry of the angels.

“And there were in the same  
country shepherds watching, and  
keeping the night watches over  
their flock.”

“And behold an angel of the  
Lord stood by them, and the  
brightness of God shone round  
about them; and they feared with  
a great fear.”

“And the angel said to them:  
Fear not; for, behold, I bring  
you good tidings of great joy,  
that shall be to all the people.”

“For, this day, is born to you a  
Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.”

“And suddenly there was with the  
angel a multitude of the heavenly  
army, praising God and saying:  
Glory to God in the highest;  
and on earth peace to men of  
good will.”

**B**EFORE the heavenly avalanche  
of light and sound and grace,  
they hurried to the stable on  
the hill.

There a woman sat beside her  
child. There an old man stood as  
sentinel. There the winds grew  
softer. There the beasts of  
the field leaned forward to  
warm Him with their tropic breath.

“And it came to pass, after the  
angels departed from them into  
heaven, the shepherds said one  
to another:

Let us go over to Bethlehem,  
and let us see this word that is  
come to pass, which the Lord  
hath shewed to us.”

“And they came with haste; and  
they found Mary and Joseph, and the  
infant lying in the manger.”



WE see again the city in stern-  
like majesty below.

There are lights in every  
window. There is the sound of  
revelry by night.

There is a march of feet along  
the roads that wind their dark  
and fetid way to lust and pleasure  
and diversion.

There is the breath of excitement  
in the air.

Caesar would count the number of  
his people.

The imperial edict has summoned  
families for the census.

From near and far they come to  
register in the city of their  
forefathers.

Amidst the motley mob that  
tide like pours within the city's  
gates, one couple holds our endless  
admiration.

They do not seem to be well  
mated.

The woman is in the flower  
of her youth.

The man already knows the  
yellow leaf of age.

Beside the beast that bears  
her on its back he walks with  
miraculous wonder in his eyes.

Never has he forgotten the  
look within her eyes when he  
betrothed her.

Unlike the women of Israel,  
she came to him with child.

Unlike them, too, she never  
would depart from him with child.

Never has he forgotten the  
warning of the angel in the dream.

“When as his mother Mary was  
espoused to Joseph, before they  
came together, she was found with  
child, of the Holy Ghost.”

“But while he thought on these  
things, behold the angel of the  
Lord appeared to him in his sleep,  
saying:

Joseph, son of David, fear not  
to take unto thee Mary, thy wife,  
for that which is conceived in her,  
is of the Holy Ghost.

And she shall bring forth a son :  
and thou shalt call his name Jesus.  
For he shall save his people from  
their sins."

Along the road they hear the  
trumpet call of Caesar.

Within her womb she hears the  
trumpet call of Christ.

Her hour is near at hand. She  
wishes she had been delivered before  
she came.

Like every expectant mother she  
wants her son to be born within the  
sanctuary of a home.

She wants His eyes to fall upon  
the scenes she loves.

She wants His body tended by  
loving hands.

She wants His face to feel the  
Nazarean winds.

Within the petalled sweetness  
of her face new lines of maternal  
instincts now appear. She must  
have rest.

She has been used to the privacy  
of the temple.

She must secure the privacy of  
a room.

On every street the inns pour forth  
a painted glory.

Within each inn are rooms of  
life and death.

Surely some room in all the inns  
will wrap its arms  
around a new born babe.

The staff of Joseph is raised  
against the door.

Its wooden sound rings weakly  
through the night.

The door is opened. Behind the  
angered porter there is a sweep  
of garments in the dance.

There is a blaze of yellow  
light.

There is a smell of upturned  
wine.

There is a medley of thick and  
drunken voices.

There is a rush of human heat  
across the air.

One look has told the innkeeper of their character.

They have not come to drink and sing and love and dance.

They are country folk from the hills.

The mocking refusal of the innkeeper is another sword within her heart.

“There is no room in the inn.”

The door is closed. The music has grown fainter.

The winds have washed away the smell of wine.

The drunken voices die in the distance as they wander.

“No room in the inn,”—from inn to inn.

“No room in the inn,”—from street to street.

“No room in the inn,”—from hour to hour.

“No room in the inn,”—till once again they have reached the outskirts of the city.

which men have bled and died.

We have less of the perfumes  
for which women have sold their  
souls.

The infant Christ does not bid  
us come in kingly fashion.

He Himself has come, a king,  
unto our dwellings.

He needs not the gold of  
conquering men, nor the perfumes  
of conquered women.

He needs the gold of a price-  
less soul, and the perfume of  
clustering virtues.

Like Wise Men let us give and  
worship and adore.

**W**HEN Christmas comes, we can  
follow the hurrying shepherds  
across the hills.

Their lives had the simplicity  
of stars and fields and sheep and  
homing birds.

Our lives have the complexity of  
machines.



Yet, when Christmas comes, we  
can leave aside machines, even as  
the shepherds left their tired  
tinkling sheepfold.

The shepherds came to Christ  
with hearts of wonder.

We can come to Christ with  
hearts of faith.

**B**UT most of all, when Christ-  
mas comes, we must make up for  
the sinning innkeepers long ago.

There was room in the inns of  
Bethlehem for broken blossoms  
and dancing feet and lust flamed  
faces and wine stained lips.

There was no room for the  
earthly resting place of God.

When Christmas comes this year,  
may there be plenty of room within  
our hearts for His sacramental coming.

He prefers our heart to every other  
resting place.

The inn of our heart is better  
than the golden walls of tabernacles  
or the slender spires of old  
Cathedrals that pierce the blue.

Even men wish to remain in the  
hearts of men, long after the fleshy  
dwelling place has dissolved.

Even as God, Christ longs to  
be laid in the manger of our heart  
at Christmas tide.

At the door of our hearts He  
is knocking with His staff of  
grace.

Let not our hearts be dulled like  
the inns of Bethlehem to His  
knocking.

Let no maddening rhythm of  
worldly pleasure crowd Him out.

Let no yellow blaze of lust-  
ful light encompass Him.

Let no smell of pagan wine  
repulse Him.

Let no medley of thick and  
worldly voices silence Him.

Let us arise and open the door  
and welcome Christ forever.

When Christ comes, then alone  
is Christmas born within us.

**H**OW happy the innkeepers of  
Bethlehem would have been, had  
one of them received the infant  
Christ, and gathered all his fellow-  
folk around him.

What joy, like a fountain,  
would have bubbled in their hearts.

What memories would have etched  
themselves upon their souls.

What tragedies might have been  
avoided in their lives.

What springtime peace would have  
blossomed through the years.

When Christmas comes, and we,  
the innkeepers, have given Christ  
the loveliest room within us, we must  
not act like selfish innkeepers  
and hold Him greedily.

At the top of all our Christmas  
lists, the gift of Christ must be  
the first we plan to send our friends.

No greater gift can we send unto  
our loved ones.

The tinsel gifts, piled up in  
sweet disorder within the market  
windows, will lose too soon their  
Christmastide significance.

They are part of life and life  
dies every day.

They are perishable goods in-  
capable of enduring.

They are bought for gold or silver.  
Whereas, the greatest gifts in life  
are free.

Love is free.

Honor is free.

Sacrifice is free.

Maternity is free.

Salvation is free.

Better than all the paid up  
gifts that life or wealth can  
bring is the freedom of Christ's  
peace and joy.

Gratuitously can we lavish them  
on men.



**W**HEN Christmas comes, each  
gift of ours must contain the  
presence of the Christ Child.

We must give books that tell  
of Christ.

We must say words that sing  
of Christ.

We must utter prayers that  
breathe of Christ.

When Christmas comes, the  
whole world must be kin.

That kinship is the Christ  
Child in our hearts.

**W**HEN Christmas comes, we  
must call out to those who trod  
with us the pathways of the past.

The soul, which is forever young,  
finds refuge in the past.

It is only the present which is  
old.

The past has attained the youth-  
fulness of eternity.

Out of the past they will come  
to us at the spirit's bidding.

The light of the Christ Child  
is now in their eyes forever.

The love of the Christ Child  
is a pulse in their hearts forever.

The peace of the Christ Child  
is the breath of their being forever.

That light, that love, that peace,  
they will bring to us in remembrance.

**W**HEN Christmas comes, we must  
go in spirit to those whom, still  
living, we love.

No earthly gift can bear our  
spirit unto them.

By prayer alone can we cross the  
distances that divide us.

By prayer alone can we spread  
Christ's Christmas joy abroad.



**W**HEN Christmas comes, we shall  
be Christ's innkeepers in the  
world.

We shall place Him in the manger  
of our hearts through Communion.

We shall gather round Him the  
souls of those we love.

We shall beg Him, as a host unto  
a guest, to bless them and remain  
with them forever.

**W**HEN Christmas comes, Christ  
is not far behind.









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